

In the Matter of)
)
Modernizing and Expanding Access to the) WT Docket No. 20-133
70/80/90 GHz Bands)

The Satellite Industry Association (“SIA”)¹ hereby replies to one element of the comments T-Mobile USA, Inc. (“T-Mobile”) filed in the above-referenced proceeding² in response to a Public Notice asking parties to supplement the record on potential use of the 70/80/90 GHz bands.³ As SIA has previously explained, any Commission consideration of these bands should protect and preserve satellite access to the spectrum. T-Mobile’s suggestion that the Commission prioritize terrestrial wireless uses without regard to the needs of satellite networks should be rejected.

³ See *Wireless Telecommunications Bureau Seeks to Supplement the Record on 70/80/90 GHz Bands Notice of Proposed Rulemaking*, DA 21-1263 (WTB rel. Oct. 8, 2021) (the “PN”).

DISCUSSION

In the 70/80/90 GHz NPRM,⁴ the Commission sought comment on a range of issues relating to future use of the 70/80/90 GHz bands. In response, T-Mobile urged the Commission to focus exclusively for now on use of the spectrum by terrestrial fixed services for wireless backhaul in support of 5G networks.⁵ According to T-Mobile, satellite use of these bands should not even be considered until “the Commission revises the antenna rules to better facilitate small-cell and other backhaul applications.”⁶

As SIA demonstrated in its reply, however, there is no basis for the Commission to limit itself in this fashion. To the contrary, there already are co-primary fixed satellite service (“FSS”) spectrum allocations in the 70/80/90 GHz bands, and SIA members are actively developing satellite networks that will operate in these bands.⁷ These satellite networks will be critical to meet growing consumer demand for high-speed, low-latency satellite services to support bandwidth-intensive applications—including telework, telehealth, and remote education—that have become so vital since the start of the pandemic, particularly in rural and remote areas where terrestrial services are lacking. Accordingly, the Commission needs to consider the impact of any rule changes on FSS use of the bands.

In the PN, the Bureau re-opened the record in this proceeding to examine: (1) “whether High Altitude Platform Stations (HAPS) or other stratospheric-based platform services could be deployed ... in the 70/80/90 GHz bands;” and (2) “the potential use of these bands to provide broadband Internet access to customers on airplanes and aboard ships,” as proposed by Aeronet

⁴ *Modernizing and Expanding Access to the 70/80/90 GHz Bands*, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and Order, 35 FCC Rcd 6039 (2020).

⁵ Comments of T-Mobile, WT Docket No. 20-133 (filed Aug. 5, 2020) at 2-3, 7.

⁶ *Id.* at 7.

⁷ Reply Comments of SIA, WT Docket No. 20-133 (filed Sept. 4, 2020) (“SIA Reply”) at 2.

Global Communications, Inc. in a separately-filed Petition for Rulemaking.⁸ Although T-Mobile acknowledged in its Comments that the PN is not an invitation to revisit terrestrial issues already addressed in response to the NPRM,⁹ it nevertheless restated its argument that the Commission should limit its initial consideration to “protect[ing] fixed terrestrial services and permit[ing] the effective coordination of new point-to-point links with incumbent links.”¹⁰

Even if T-Mobile’s argument were germane, it continues to be invalid. Nothing has changed. The co-primary allocation for FSS remains; satellite companies’ development activities for the bands are ongoing; consumer demand for high-speed, low-latency broadband to support bandwidth-intensive applications continues to grow; and prioritizing terrestrial use of the bands without even considering satellite needs would be unwarranted and harmful to consumers.

The Commission’s goal in this proceeding is to make the 70/80/90 GHz bands a home for services that will “provide broadband Internet access to consumers and communities that may otherwise lack robust, consistent connectivity.”¹¹ To achieve that goal, the Commission must necessarily consider and accommodate¹² potential uses of these bands by satellite services, which can reach communities in rural and remote areas that may never be served by terrestrial services.

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, for the reasons set forth above and in the SIA Reply, the Commission should take satellite requirements into account in examining potential use of the 70/80/90 GHz bands.

Respectfully submitted,

⁸ PN at n.2, *citing* Petition for Rulemaking of Aeronet Global Communications Inc., RM-11824 (filed Feb. 6, 2019).

⁹ T-Mobile Comments at 2.

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ PN at 1.

¹² *See* Comments of SIA, WT Docket No. 20-133 at 4 (filed Aug. 5, 2020).

